

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 RSC-01

CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00

L-02 H-01 SCS-03 COA-01 SCA-01 INR-07 DLOS-03 PRS-01

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FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3653

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUAYAQUIL 198

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EFIS, PLOS, EC, US

SUBJ: SEIZURE OF U.S. TUNA VESSELS: WHERE WILL CONFISCATED CATCH
BE STORED?

1. GOE WILL FACE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE PROBLEM OF FINDING ADEQUATE STORAGE SPACE IF ALL CATCH ABOARD RECENTLY SEIZED U.S. TUNA VESSELS IS CONFISCATED. FREEZING FACILITIES IN MANTA AND SALINAS NOW ALMOST FILLED TO CAPACITY WITH DEL MONTE REPORTING THEY HAVE SPACE FOR ONLY 300 ADDITIONAL TONS AND INEPACA SPACE FOR 400 MORE TONS. OWNERS OF STORAGE FACILITIES WILL PROBABLY AGREE TO TAKE CONFISCATED CATCH ONLY IF ORDERED TO DO SO BY GOVERNMENT BECAUSE THEY HAVE COMMITMENTS TO OWN BOATS AND CONTRACTS WITH OTHERS. THEY ALSO ANXIOUS NOT TO ALIENATE U.S. CANNERIES THAT IMPORT THEIR TUNA.

2. LOCAL BOAT OWNERS ALREADY SUFFERING FROM DELAYS IN UNLOADING BECAUSE OF SCARCE STORAGE SPACE. LOCAL FISHING INDISTRY SOURCES INFORMED CONGEN FEB. 2 THAT BOAT OWNERS WOULD DELIVER WRITTEN PROTEST TO SUB SECRETARY FOR FISHERIES
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IF HE ORDERS THAT LIMITED STORAGE SPACE NOW AVAILABLE BE

USED TO ACCOMMODATE CONFISCATED CATCH.

3. IF ALL OF CATCH OF SEIZED BOATS IS CONFISCATED PROBLEM OF SCARCE STORAGE SPACE WILL BECOME EVEN MORE ACUTE. THIS FISH WILL BE DIFFICULT TO MOVE. NO ONE CONTEMPLATES EVENTUALLY EXPORTING IT TO U.S., DOMESTIC MARKET CAN NOT ABSORB IT, AND GIVEN PRESENT STATUS WORLD TUNA MARKET, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO FIND FOREIGN BUYERS. IF FISH IS CONFISCATED IT LIKELY THAT IT WILL HAVE TO BE STORED FOR MANY MONTHS WHILE NEW OWNERS, NAVY AND NATIONAL FISHING ENTERPRISE (EPNA), SEEK PURCHASERS. DEWITT

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